

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1- 36 (Cancelled)

37. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 71, comprising the further step of:

inserting a receiver into said fastener-receiving cavity prior to the panel being inserted within the panel joining member.

38. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 37, comprising the further step of:

introducing an adhesive between the panel and at least one of the sidewalls of the panel joining member.

39. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 38, comprising the further step of:

substantially tightening said fastener and forming an adhesive bond weld between the panel and the sidewall of the panel joining member when the fastener has been tightened substantially.

40. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 71, wherein the fastener is an expanding rivet fastener to enable it to engage the panel tightly.

41. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 71, wherein the fastener has a screw-thread to engage at least one of said panel and said panel joining member.

42. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 37, wherein the receiver is an adapter, the adapter having a shape complementary to that of the fastener-receiving cavity.

43.(Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 71, wherein the fastener-receiving cavity has an open end and narrows away from its open end.

44.(Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 37, additionally including the step of introducing said fastener into the receiver at an angle inclined to the axis perpendicular to the surface of the panel.

45. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 71, wherein the panel includes at least one projection to engage a corresponding recess in a panel joining member thereby forming a push-fit type joint.

46.(Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 71, wherein opposing sidewalls of the panel joining member are inclined together at an angle of up to 5°.

47.(Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 46, wherein the incline angle is from 0.7° to 2°.

48. (Cancelled)

49.(Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 72, wherein two panel-receiving cavities subtend an angle of less than 180° and the fastener aperture is located in the internal wall of the panel joining member.

50. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 72, wherein the receiver of the fastener assembly is secured within a panel along a selected panel end for inserting into a panel-receiving cavity.

51. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 49, wherein the receiver of the fastener assembly is secured within a panel along a selected panel end for inserting into a panel-receiving cavity.

52. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 72, wherein the receiver comprises a body adapted for engagement with a panel, the body including an open mouthed recess for receiving a fastener.

53. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 52, wherein the receiver narrows away from the open mouth.

54. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 72, wherein the spaced opposing sidewalls are inclined together at an angle of up to 5°.

55. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 54, wherein the incline angle is from 0.7° to 2°.

56. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 72, wherein the panel joining member includes a chamfered edge.

57. (Previously Amended) The panel joining assembly according to Claim 72, wherein the fastener is a screw having a flat ended shank.

58. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 70, further comprising:
an adapter to receive said fastener and for insertion into said fastener-receiving cavity, the adapter comprising an opening having an open end having a mouth and a closed end, to receive said fastener, the mouth of the opening having a diameter greater than that of said fastener.

59. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 58, wherein the opening includes a narrowing at its closed end to grip the end of a fastener.

60. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 59, wherein the opening and the narrowing are cylindrical.

61. (Currently Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 60, wherein the cylinders cylindrical opening and the narrowing are co-axial.

62. (Cancelled)

63. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 70, further comprising:
an adhesive disposed between the panel and at least one sidewall of the panel joining member to increase the strength of the joint.

64. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 70, further comprising:
an adapter having an open end located in said fastener-receiving cavity, the adapter having a shape complementary to that of said fastener-receiving cavity.

65. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 63, further comprising:
an adapter located in said fastener-receiving cavity, the adapter having a shape complementary to that of said fastener-receiving cavity.

66. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 64, wherein the adapter narrows away from its open end to ensure that the material from which the adapter is formed undergoes plastic flow around the fastening member as the fastening member is fully engaged.

67. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 70, wherein said fastener includes a screw thread to engage the panel joining member.

68. (Cancelled)

69. (Previously Amended) The panel joint according to Claim 70, wherein said fastener is aligned along an axis which is at an angle inclined to the axis perpendicular to the surface of the panel.

70. (Currently Amended) A panel joint, comprising:

a panel having an inner surface, an outer surface, at least one end and a fastener-receiving cavity formed within said panel which opens onto said inner surface, generally adjacent to said one end of said panel;

a panel joining member having opposed, spaced-apart inner and outer sidewalls which define therebetween a panel-receiving cavity for receipt therein of said one end of said panel, said inner sidewall of said panel joining member having an aperture formed therethrough which is positioned to align with said fastener-receiving cavity when said one end of said panel is received with said panel-receiving cavity;

at least one stop member formed on said panel joining member adjacent to said panel-receiving cavity against which said one end of said panel abuts when fully inserted into said panel-receiving cavity; and

a screw-threaded fastener removably insertable through said aperture of said inner sidewall of said panel joining member and into said fastener-receiving cavity to enable said fastener to engage said panel and urge the outer surface of said panel against the outer sidewall of said panel joining member, said fastener-receiving cavity including an aperture to receive a nut into which said fastener can be screwed, the panel joining member and the nut cooperatively engaging to lock the nut against the inner sidewall of the panel joining member.

71. (Currently Amended) In a method of connecting a panel to a panel joining member employing a panel assembly of the type comprising, a panel having an inner surface, an outer surface, and at least one end, a panel joining member having opposed, spaced-apart inner and outer sidewalls which define therebetween a panel-receiving cavity, said inner sidewall of said panel joining member having an aperture formed therethrough,

at least one stop member formed on said panel joining member adjacent to said panel-receiving cavity, and a fastener including a screw-thread, the method comprising the steps of:

forming a fastener-receiving cavity within said panel which opens onto said inner surface, generally adjacent to said one end of said panel;

forming an aperture in the open end of said fastener receiving cavity and inserting said one end of said panel into said panel-receiving cavity of said panel joining member;

abutting said one end of said panel against said one stop member and aligning said fastener-receiving cavity of said panel with said aperture of said inner sidewall of said panel joining member; and

inserting said fastener through said aperture of said inner sidewall of said panel joining member and screwing the fastener into the nut and into said fastener-receiving cavity of said panel to enable said fastener to engage said panel and urge the outer surface of said panel against the outer sidewall of said panel joining member the nut

and the panel joining member is operating to lock the nut against the inner sidewall of the panel joining member.

72. (Currently Amended) A panel joining assembly, comprising:

a panel joining member having at least one pair of opposed, spaced-apart inner and outer sidewalls which define therebetween a panel-receiving cavity for receipt therein of a panel having a fastener-receiving cavity formed therein, the open end of the fastener-receiver cavity including an aperture to receive a nut, said inner sidewall of said panel joining member having an aperture formed therethrough, and at least one stop member formed on at least one of said sidewalls of said panel joining member, adjacent to said panel-receiving cavity against which a panel abuts when fully inserted into said panel-receiving cavity; and

at least one fastener assembly comprising a screw-threaded fastener and a receiver, said receiver disposed within said fastener-receiving cavity and said fastener removably insertable through said aperture of said inner sidewall of said panel joining member screwable into said nut and into said receiver in said fastener-receiving cavity of a panel to urge said receiver to engage said panel and, in turn, urge said panel against the outer sidewall of said panel joining member.